

TO: Studio Students and Parents
FROM: Julia Knowles, Cello Instructor
RE: Policy for Studio Lessons
DATE: June 1, 2016
E-MAIL: juliknow@umich.edu
PHONE: 518-937-4931

Thank you for expanding your study of the cello through private lessons! I am very excited to have you be a part of my growing studio of cellists.

I have been teaching students in the Ann Arbor area for four years and have previously taught private lessons in Saratoga Springs, New York. I am entering my fifth year at the University of Michigan School of Music where I am working toward a bachelor's degree in Cello Performance and Music Education. Prior to beginning college, I attended Juilliard Pre-College, which provided me with a great opportunity to work with many high-level musicians and educators during my high school years.

Starting in the fall of 2016, I will begin coursework to become a certified Suzuki teacher, a well-established private and group lesson string pedagogy for both young students and secondary students. I have worked with beginning and advanced cellists in elementary, middle, and high school, as well as post secondary and adult students. In addition to teaching private lessons, I frequently coach middle school and high school cellists at Franklin – Livonia High School, Ann Arbor Open, and North Farmington High School. I have completed fieldwork through my music education degree in elementary general music education, high school orchestra, and beginning strings (elementary and middle school). I believe it is important to have experience in public school education to create continuity between classroom music and private lessons.

Weekly lessons provide the structure and individualized instruction necessary to build strong technique and proper set up on the cello, develop sensitive musical expression, acquire efficient problem solving techniques, and become a successful and confident performer. With the development of this unique student-teacher relationship over time, the teacher will gradually hand the knowledge and responsibility of how to practice and perform to the student. Parents are encouraged to monitor their son or daughter's progress to ensure dedication and consistency. However, it is ultimately the student's personal interest and investment in learning cello that brings the most joy and improvement. Cello playing is a beautiful way to connect to others and is a satisfying outlet for creative expression. For however long you study cello, my hope is that it changes your life every day thereafter.

Below you will find the expectations for students in my studio. The policy is as follows:

PRACTICE

Students are required to practice lesson music consistently for whatever time period is required to complete the goals outlined during the lesson that week. Consistency is met by practicing at least **six days a week**. A minimum of **180 minutes per week** is expected at the intermediate level. It is the teacher's responsibility to work with the student to provide clear and achievable goals. It is the student's responsibility to practice, study, and listen to the music they are working on in order to meet these goals.

LESSON RATES (Updated June 1, 2016)

Hour Private Lesson: \$40

Half Hour Private Lesson: \$30

Ensemble Coaching: \$20/half hour

LOCATION & PARKING

I teach all lessons at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance located on North Campus. The address is:

1100 Baits Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Parking is free after 5pm Monday through Friday and free all day on Saturday and Sunday. I try to schedule all lessons on the weekend or after 5pm on weekdays to avoid parents having to pay for parking. In the event that a lesson is scheduled before 5pm, you may park in the pay lot at the School of Music for \$1.60/hour or park at the Bursley dorm for free and walk to the music building.

I am located in the practice room wing on the ground floor. The room where we will be working is an ensemble practice room. Any change in location will be given advanced notice. Parents are welcome to stay at the music school during their child's lesson if they choose. There is seating in the atrium as well as in the student lounge, both of which are located near the practice wing. It is expected that if the parent leaves, he or she will return by the end of the lesson to pick up their child.

In the case that space at the School of Music is unavailable, the parent/student will be given advance notice and other plans will be made. Only under special circumstances will the teacher travel to the home of the student for lessons. If requested by the parent/student, there will be a travel fee:

- **\$5** added to lesson rate if the location is **within 30 miles** of U of M
- **\$10** added to lesson rate if the location is **more than 30 miles** from U of M

LESSON PAYMENT

Lessons may be paid for in **two or four week increments**. Payment must be received at the beginning of the lesson on which payment is due and may be in the form of **cash or check**. In the event that payment is forgotten, it is up to the teacher to decide if the lesson will be taught. A \$5.00 late fee will be added if payment is more than two weeks late. Checks will be cashed on or after the date marked on the check. It is the responsibility of both the student and teacher to keep track of payment and check in frequently to avoid miscommunication.

RESCHEUDLING LESSONS

To reschedule lessons, contact me at least **24 hours in advance of the regularly scheduled lesson**. For lessons canceled *less than twenty-four hours in advance, make up lessons are not guaranteed*. When such short notice is given, it is difficult to fill the vacant lesson time with another student's make-up lesson. However, if a student becomes sick the day of the lesson, call or text 518-937-4931 as soon as possible to inform me. An occasional missed lesson due to sickness *will* be rescheduled if a phone call / text is received from the parent at the first opportunity after the parent finds that the child is ill. Repeated absence from lessons due to sickness cannot be made up.

Please plan ahead and inform the teacher of any conflicts you may have with the regular scheduled lesson time as soon as you know of the conflict. These may include vacation, graduation, school performances, athletic games and practices, etc. It is unacceptable to cancel a lesson because of an event scheduled well in advance. If the lesson is cancelled within 24 hours of the scheduled time under these circumstances, **lesson payment will be forfeited**.

MISSING LESSONS

If a student does not show up for a lesson or shows up late, the time is forfeited and the lesson fee charged. If rescheduling is necessary, call/text 24 hours before the scheduled lesson time at 518-937-4931.

The teacher is responsible for informing students of any lesson conflicts at least two weeks prior. Performance and class conflicts will be made known as soon as they are scheduled. If the teacher misses a lesson or any portion of it for any reason, it will be made up at a time convenient to the parent/student.

Some studio teachers in Ann Arbor have adopted a "no make-up lesson" policy and simply charge for lessons the student does not attend due to the sheer volume of rescheduled lessons. I prefer to teach all lessons for which parents have paid. Help preserve this convenience by making as few schedule changes as possible. Changing lesson times for athletic team games, if infrequently done is fine. When team practices are called on short notice in conflict with lesson times, please try to excuse your son or daughter from the team practice.

MAKE UP LESSONS

It is expected that to maintain consistent study, students will have a lesson every week. Please try to arrange for a make up lesson within one week of the missed lesson. If one week is not possible, students must make up their lesson **within one month of the time**

they missed or otherwise forfeit the right to the make up the lesson. It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for the make up lesson.

ENSEMBLE COACHING

I am happy to help prepare any ensemble you are involved with for an upcoming performance through one or more ensemble coachings. Coachings outside of regular lesson times will be charged at the rate of \$20 per half hour. If I need to travel to your location, a \$5 fee will also be charged. If you wish to bring an accompanist to part of your lesson in preparation for an audition, please let me know in advance so I can schedule a room with a grand piano. It will be your responsibility to pay your accompanist, but there will be no additional fee for the coaching if the coaching is during our regular lesson.

Students usually have some rehearsals alone with the accompanist and some with their private instructor present to coach the coordination of tempos, rhythms, styles, and interpretation. It is up to the student and parent to decide how many rehearsals he or she wishes to have with the teacher in attendance. At least one is recommended, though some students schedule two or more. It depends on the difficulty of the accompaniment, the ability of the accompanist, and the difficulty of the solo.

INSTRUMENT RENTAL & PURCHASE

Many students looking to take private lessons rent a cello and bow through Shar Music (<https://www.sharmusic.com/Rentals/>) in Ann Arbor. They are an amazing resource that many communities do not have, so I highly recommend taking advantage of them. Their rentals are flexible and affordable and they will set you up with everything you need from instrument sizing to rosin. If renting through Shar is not an option, I am happy to talk to your orchestra teacher to see if we can figure out something through your school.

If you are looking to buy an instrument, please inform me. Shar is a good option, but often the best cellos come through private sales. I frequently know of one or two colleges looking to sell their instrument. When looking to buy either a cello or a bow, it is important to try out many different ones before purchasing. I would recommend bringing a potential cello to lesson so we can talk about if it's a good fit. Each cello and bow is very different and there are many qualities that should be met before purchase is made.

It is important to note that the quality of the instrument has an effect on the student's level of playing. The better the quality of the instrument, the more pleasing and nuanced the tone will be. The student will also find more ease and freedom playing on a higher quality cello.

LESSON MATERIALS

Each lesson the student must bring:

- Music organized in a binder
- Technique Book
- Pencil
- Notebook

- Endpin Anchor (<http://www.sharmusic.com/Accessories/Endpin-Anchors-Stops/Xeros-Cello-Endpin-Anchor-in-Black.axd#sthash.oM2Cq8XH.dpbs>)
- Rosin
- Metronome (I use the Tempo app <http://www.frozenape.com/tempo-metronome.html>)
- Tuner (I use Cleartune <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/cleartune-chromatic-tuner/id286799607?mt=8>)

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

To get the most out of your musical experience, it is important to engage with music making outside of weekly private lessons. It is required to participate in at least one ensemble. For many students, this ensemble is their school orchestra. If orchestra is offered at your school, please enroll and participate. If it is not, or you are not a part of an educational institution, there are many other options in Southeast Michigan. You may form your own chamber ensemble (duo, trio, quartet) with other musician friends, play consistently at your church, or audition and enroll in many of the adult and youth ensemble programs in the area.

Michigan Youth Ensembles

https://www.music.umich.edu/special_programs/youth/mye/MYEauditiondates.htm

Detroit Symphony Orchestra Civic Youth Ensembles

http://www.dso.org/Page.aspx?page_id=24&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

Community Music School Ann Arbor (Ann Arbor School for Performing Arts)

Youth String Ensembles (Beginner, Intermediate/Advanced)

http://www.aa-spa.org/classes/youth_orchestras/

Chamber Music

<http://aa-spa.org/classes/chamber/>

New Horizons Senior String Orchestra

http://www.aa-spa.org/classes/new_horizons_senior_string_orchestra

Dexter Community Orchestra

<http://www.dextercommunityorchestra.org/join.html>

Life Sciences Orchestra

<http://lso.med.umich.edu/join/audition-info/>

Summer Programs for Middle and High School Students:

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp

<http://bluelake.org>

MASTA Strings Camp

<http://www.mastastringcamps.com>

Interlochen Arts Camp

<http://camp.interlochen.org>

AUDITIONS AND SOLO & ENSEMBLE

If you are planning on auditioning for an ensemble or will be participating in Solo & Ensemble, please inform me as soon as you think you want to pursue this opportunity. It is suggested that to feel comfortable at an audition, you should start preparing at least two months in advance. Please give yourself enough time to adequately prepare so you may feel confident and excited on the day of the audition. The sooner I know about the opportunity, the better I can adjust our lesson goals to match the preparation needed. Please note that it becomes very difficult to adequately prepare for an audition when short notice is given.

DATES

As of June 1, 2016 I will not be teaching between the following dates:

- June 17th – July 2nd
- July 31st – August 7th
- August 11th – 14th
- October 14th – 18th
- November 22nd – 27th
- December 20th – 31st

I am always working to improve and adapt my practices through my education and performance to ensure that my personal pedagogy leads my students to success. A student will be successful if he or she personally has the purpose to be a fine player and applies their knowledge through regular practice. Parents may call at any time to request a progress report, or may come to the lesson to discuss progress as a part of the lesson time.

Thank you for your cooperation with this policy. If there is anything I can do to further serve you please don't hesitate to call me at 518-937-4931 or email juliknow@umich.edu.

Thank you,

Julia Knowles
Cello Instructor
Ann Arbor, MI

Dear Parents,

Please indicate that you have read and understood this policy letter by signing this page, cutting it off and returning it to me at the next lesson.

Thank you,

Julia Knowles

I have read and understood this policy letter and agree to follow it as long as my son/ daughter is enrolled.

student signature

parent signature

Student Name: _____

Student School: _____

Contact # 1:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Contact # 2:

Name:

Phone:

Email: